

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for processing information, comprising
[[the steps of]]:

a) maintaining a database of bar codes and destination information [[corresponding
thereto]] associated with the bar codes, the database being accessible by a remote device;

b) receiving information, at the remote device, from a plurality of bar code scanners,
the received information from each bar code scanner including source and bar code information
[[at data from at least one bar code]];

c) [[determining source and destination information for the received information, the
destination information being determined from]] identifying at least a portion of the destination
information stored in the database based on at least a portion of the received bar code
information [[and database entries relating thereto]]; [[and]]

d) [[distributing data from the received information to]] accessing from the remote
device data stored at a network location [[at least one]] referenced by the identified portion of
[[destination identified by]] the destination information; and

e) providing the data received by the remote device from the network location to
users of the bar code scanners based on the received source information.

2. (CANCEL)

3. (CANCEL)

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 1, [[wherein]] the

information [[is]] received from the bar code scanners being in an encrypted form [[and is decrypted before the step of distributing]], further comprising:

decrypting the received information.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim [[1]] 3, wherein [[the source information comprises device]] receiving the information from the bar code scanners comprises receiving identification information associated with the bar code scanners.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 1, wherein [[the destination information comprises information from a scanned bar code]] receiving the information comprising:

receiving a portion of the destination information associated with the bar code information.

7. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELLED)

8. (CANCEL)

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 8, [[wherein the unique bar codes are assigned for a given time period and are reassignable thereafter]] further comprising:

disassociating the bar codes with the destination information associated with those bar codes.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 8, further comprising [[distributing]] associating a bar code image file [[for the unique bar code when the bar code is assigned]] with one or more of the bar codes.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 1, further comprising associating security information with [[each bar code scanner]] one or more of the bar code scanners before allowing use of the one or more scanners [[and requiring the security information from a user before use of the scanner or before accepting bar code information from the scanner]].

12. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELLED)

13. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 1, further comprising receiving time information from [[a plurality of]] one or more of the bar code scanners.

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 1, further comprising receiving location information from [[a plurality of]] one or more of the bar code scanners.

15. (CANCEL)

16. (CANCEL)

17. (CANCEL)

18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim 1, wherein the information ~~[[is]]~~ received by ~~[[wireless communication]]~~ the remote device wirelessly.

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The method according to claim ~~[[1]]~~ 4, wherein the ~~[[data is distributed to the destination over the]]~~ network location is an Internet location.

20. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A portal for processing information, comprising:

a) a first interface for receiving information from a plurality of bar code scanners, the received information from each bar code scanner including source and bar code information ~~[[at data from at least one bar code]]~~; and

b) a processor for: ~~[[determining source and destination information for]]~~
identifying at least a portion of the destination information stored in a database,
wherein the database includes destination information associated with one or more bar
codes and the database being accessible by the processor,

accessing a network location ~~[[at least one]]~~ referenced by the identified portion
of ~~[[destination identified by]]~~ the destination information, and

providing the data received from the network location to users of the bar code
scanners based on the received source information.

~~[[c)]~~ a database of bar codes and destination information corresponding thereto

maintained by the processor, wherein the processor determines the destination information from the received information and database entries relating thereto; and

d) a second interface for distributing data associated with the received information to at least one destination identified by the destination information.]]

21. (CANCEL)

22. (CANCEL)

23. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The portal according to claim 20, [[wherein the processor receives]] the information received from the bar code scanners being in an encrypted form, wherein the processor [[and]] decrypts the received information [[before distributing the same]].

24. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The portal according to claim 20, wherein the processor receives [[source information comprises device]] identification information associated with the bar code scanners.

25. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The portal according to claim 20, wherein the [[destination information comprises]] received information comprises [[from a scanned]] a portion of the destination information associated with the bar [[code]] codes.

26. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELLED)

27. (CANCEL)

28. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The portal according to claim 27, wherein the [[unique bar codes are assigned for a given time period and are reassignable thereafter]] bar codes are disassociated with the destination information associated with those bar codes.

29. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The portal according to claim 27, [[further comprising]] wherein the processor [[distributing]] associates a bar code image file [[for the unique bar code when the bar code is assigned]] with one or more of the bar codes.

30. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The portal according to claim 20, [[further comprising]] wherein the processor [[associating]] associates security information with [[each]] one or more of the bar code scanners [[scanner and requiring the security information from a user before use of the scanner]] before allowing use of the one or more bar code scanners.

31. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELLED)

32. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The portal according to claim 20, wherein the first interface receives time information from [[a plurality of]] one or more of the bar code scanners.

33. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The portal according to claim 20, wherein the first interface receives location information from [[a plurality of]] one or more of the bar code

scanners.

34. (CANCEL)

35. (CANCEL)

36. (CANCEL)

37. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The portal according to claim 20, wherein the first interface receives the information wirelessly [[by wireless communication]].

38. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The portal according to claim 20, wherein the [[second interface distributes data to the destination]] network location [[over the]] is an Internet location.

39. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELLED)

40-96. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELLED)

97-98. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELLED)

99 - 115. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELLED)

116. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method for using a bar [[codes]] code encoded with information corresponding to an externally assigned entity, comprising [[the steps of]]:

providing [[said]] the bar code with a prefix portion indicating whether the bar code is encrypted or not;

connecting a user to a telephone number or an Internet portal when the bar code is read with a bar code reader [[in dependence on]] depending upon whether the bar code is encrypted; and

transmitting information from the Internet portal to the user [[based]] when the user [[connected]] connects to the Internet portal.

117. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELLED)

118.-130. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELLED)

131. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method [[for using bar codes encoded with information corresponding to an externally assigned entity received at an Internet portal]], comprising [[the steps of]]:

[[providing said bar code to a group of users;

connecting each user to the Internet portal when the bar code is read with a bar code reader; and

permitting the group to collaborate at a web page]]

receiving the bar codes selected by a group of users using the bar code readers;

allowing the group of users to connect to the Internet portal in response to receiving the

bar codes;

permitting the group of users to communicate with each other through a common web page based on the information encoded in each bar code and based on the destination information corresponding to the received bar codes, wherein the destination information is accessible from the Internet portal.

132. (PREVIOUSLY CANCELLED)